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# The Role of the Naval Services in Irregular Warfare

by

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## **Introduction**

The United States Navy of today finds itself facing a wider variety of threats in more locations than it ever has in its history. The national security of the U.S. depends on the naval services' ability to meet these maritime challenges across a wide spectrum of conventional and irregular threats. In addition, the stability of today's interconnected, global economy is vital to U.S. national interests and rests on the requirement for commercial shipping to be able to freely navigate the waters around the world.

As today's "long" war on terrorism continues to unfold, we have seen a threat develop that employs insurgent activity and terrorism to counter the capability of superior conventional U.S. forces. The recent development of an Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC) shifts the focus of the military's irregular operations on a region's relevant population. This is the central tenant in the mission to eliminate the ability of international terrorist organizations to operate amongst foreign populations. The increasing emphasis on IW is forcing the Navy to reconsider the traditional definition of the "maritime environment" in which the service operates. The jointly signed document, "A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower" outlines the increasing importance that littoral regions and inland waterways such as ports, harbors, and rivers have on our nation's security. The widening nature of this maritime domain will require greater cooperation with the U.S. Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and all of our international partners in the future to ensure stability and security in order to protect our nation from terrorist organizations.

Building a pivotal state's capacity to provide for its own security is a fundamental goal for the U.S. as it attempts to eliminate terrorist and insurgent safe havens around the

world. The U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command's (AFSOC) 6<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Squadron (SOS) provides a critical capability in missions such as security assistance (SA) and aviation foreign internal defense (AvFID). As such, it provides a model for the naval services as they build their maritime capability in these mission areas. AFSOC's recent proposal to develop an "IW Wing" is one example of how the Navy can utilize the Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) in a similar manner to accomplish irregular missions in the maritime domain.

Traditionally, irregular maritime missions were normally assigned to components within the Marine Corps and Naval Special Warfare (NSW). However with today's current operating environment and tempo, the creation of NECC and greater cooperation with the Coast Guard's Deployable Operations Group (DOG) has given the Navy a capability to carry out SA and FID missions around the globe. Additionally, maritime civil affairs teams and Seabee construction battalions provide a critical ability to win the hearts and minds of populations in pivotal regions. These forces in turn help promote our nation's security and stability while preventing conflicts from developing into larger scale wars. Technologies such as unmanned vehicles, SSGN submarines, and the littoral combat ship (LCS) are all critical to the future success in these irregular maritime missions.

The Navy continues to conduct IW missions around the globe 24/7. As such, the author concludes this research by recommending several initiatives to improve the capability of the service to provide security in the face of these irregular threats. These initiatives include growing NECC and developing ways to *recruit* and *retain* quality people in the community, developing a cultural training center of excellence for

deploying “expeditionary” Sailors, continuing to invest in key technologies, establishing a permanent unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) squadron, and finally establishing an IW center of excellence within NECC. In addition, the author provides a future example of how the Navy and Coast Guard can further its IW operations to promote stability and economic development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), thereby removing a potential safe haven for future terrorist activity.



## **20<sup>th</sup> Century American Military Posture: A Brief History**

### **Cold War**

In the aftermath of World War II, the United States and its European allies quickly found themselves pitted against the Soviet Union and its expansionist communist ideology. The establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1947 marked the creation of a bi-polar world in which the United States and the Soviet Union separated the world into two distinct blocs. In much of the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United State military was poised to counter the Soviets through a grand strategy of containment. As a result, the United States found itself fighting a conventional war on the Korean peninsula and a mixed insurgency / conventional war in Vietnam. In the fifty years following World War II, the United States grew the size of its military forces to counter a single threat, the Soviet Union. Ronald Reagan's goal of a 600 ship Navy was one of the cornerstones of this military buildup. Additionally, nuclear submarines carrying inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) were an instrumental component to the nuclear triad designed to counter the Soviet nuclear threat. It is not surprising, then, to see that during the Cold War, the U.S. Navy structured its force to meet the opposing superpower's navy and nuclear force.

### **A Period of Transition**

The events of 1989 marked a historic turning point, as the Soviet Union fell and one by one members of the Warsaw Pact saw their governments embrace democratic reforms. This began a period of reform for the entire U.S. military, as it began to reassess the security threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and thus the force needed to meet that threat. After the success of the Persian Gulf War, it was evident that the military would need to

transition to a more nimble force that embraced technological advancements to meet the new security environment.

The events of September 11, 2001 proved to be a watershed event that would highlight the most serious threat the U.S. would face in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, extremist terrorism. President George W. Bush's decision to invade Afghanistan in order to destroy the Taliban and Al-Qaeda training camps marked the beginning of the "Global War on Terror" (GWOT). The follow-on 2003 invasion of Iraq solidified the global nature of this conflict and highlighted the insurgent nature of the threats we will likely face in the future. These two conflicts eventually developed into two insurgent wars which led the military to readdress counter-insurgency (COIN) tactics and highlighted the need for improved joint doctrine to deal with the threats we expect to face while fighting this "long" war. This doctrine, termed irregular warfare (IW), shifts the focus of conflict from defeating an enemy's forces to influencing the population within a critical region. IW requires a comprehensive approach to warfare including all elements of the diplomatic, informational, military, economic, and cultural (DIME-C) instruments of power (IOPs).

Although doctrinally IW is a relatively new term, the elements that comprise it are anything but new. In fact, despite its focus on conventional and nuclear forces during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. found itself confronting aspects of IW in places like Vietnam, Afghanistan, Somalia, and the Philippines. Appendix A lists some of these historical examples of IW. Although conventional conflicts have by no means become a thing of the past, these types of less direct, irregular conflicts will likely dominate the landscape during our "long" war against Islamic fascism and global terrorism.

## **Joint Irregular Warfare Doctrine**

As the threat that our military faces has changed, so too must our strategy and doctrine to meet that threat. The 2005 National Military Strategy (NMS) provided general guidance on the threat facing the U.S. in the post-9/11 environment. It outlined the need for redefining military forces in order to defeat terrorists across a spectrum of activities.<sup>1</sup> Further details of this transformation were provided in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Report (QDR), which outlined several important aspects to the way we will need to fight wars in the future. The QDR notes that we are “involved in a Long War that is irregular in nature [and that] this war requires the U.S. military to adopt unconventional and indirect approaches” to dealing with these threats.<sup>2</sup> It listed three objectives for U.S. forces, including Homeland Defense, meeting the commitments of the Global War on Terror, and finally maintaining the ability to carry out conventional campaigns.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the document also highlights future requirements and force posture to meet these three objectives, noting the need to shift the structure of our forces to meet the challenges posed by more irregular threats. Appendix B illustrates the shifting force structure and the four types of threats faced by the U.S. as outlined in the QDR.

These two documents provided the foundation for the creation of joint IW doctrine. By examining the lessons learned in Afghanistan and Iraq and using the NMS and QDR as guidance, U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the Marine Corps co-authored the “Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept” in September 2007. This document officially defines IW as “A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other

capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will.”<sup>4</sup> This type of warfare is not the typical force on force engagement that the U.S. military has rightfully prepared for over the last half century (although it can contain elements of traditional warfare). Instead, it is a mix of warfare techniques aimed at creating a favorable environment for establishing sustainable security in areas around the globe where ungoverned lands or failed states can create a ripe environment for terrorist activity. Appendix C lists the activities and elements of warfare that comprise IW. Each of these elements is unique in mission and may contain aspects of both conventional and irregular warfare.<sup>5</sup> As previously mentioned, the principle focus of IW centers around the relevant population. Appendix D illustrates this shift in focus of IW and the different actors involved when compared to traditional warfare. A final tenant of IW is that military means alone will not be sufficient in winning the hearts and minds of the relevant populations. Instead, success can only be achieved through a mix of diplomatic, economic, and cultural forces designed to influence events and attitudes around the world. By its very nature, success in IW will require a long term approach which may not always be easily measured by day-to-day metrics.

#### *Irregular Warfare: A Philosophy of Sun Tzu?*

The doctrine of IW is not a new concept in the realm of war fighting and has applications derived from several military theorists. The Joint Operating Concept describes the Clausewitzian nature of IW in regards to the “paradoxical trinity,” highlighting the relationship between two components of the trinity, the government and population.<sup>6</sup> In addition, I contend that IW also contains aspects from the military theorist Sun Tzu's teachings. Sun Tzu emphasized taking a long term approach to

warfare, a cornerstone of IW. He also notes that true success in warfare is achieving victory without fighting, claiming that “the highest realization of warfare is to attack the enemy’s plans; next is to attack their alliances, next to attack their army; and the lowest is to attack their fortified cities.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, if a nation can achieve its strategic goals without fighting, they will have achieved this highest realization in warfare. This also is a key tenant of IW, as we focus on influencing local populations in order to prevent war. Finally, Sun Tzu highlights the importance of “unorthodox” tactics when employing military forces in “imaginative, unconventional, unexpected ways.”<sup>8</sup> Even Sun Tzu might be surprised at some of the ways U.S. forces are being employed around the world today. Nothing can be more unconventional than using military forces to build schools in Afghanistan or to provide medical care to impoverished populations in Africa. Yet, this is exactly the type of activity seen in today’s GWOT and some of the tactics that will produce the most significant gains in winning hearts and minds of populations in areas critical to our struggle against terrorist organizations.

## **Transitioning Naval Strategy for the “Long” War**

In order to understand the U.S. Navy’s role in IW, one must have a basic grasp on past and current strategy to be able to look forward to see how naval forces can best be utilized to contribute to the GWOT. During the Cold War, the Navy’s core function was to maintain maritime supremacy over the Soviet naval forces. During the 1980s, President Reagan set out on an ambitious plan to develop a 600 ship Navy in order to maintain superiority over the growing Soviet fleet. Increased production of warships such as the Nimitz class aircraft carriers and Ohio and Los Angeles class submarines were instrumental to this effort. These improvements and others across Naval Aviation were cornerstones to maintaining the strategic goal of maritime dominance over the Soviet Union.

After the Cold War, the Navy was forced to cut back on its ambitious plan of 600 ships while reformulating its overall strategy. In 1992, the Navy published “From the Sea.” This document shifted naval strategy to meet the new threat environment. While it noted that the role of the Navy was still to win the nation’s wars, it also indicated a shift in priorities, focusing on the ability to project naval power ashore in order to influence regional conflicts.<sup>9</sup> The Navy realized this would require assets to increasingly operate in the littoral regions of the world. The strategy highlighted that the expeditionary nature of the Navy gave national security decision makers a great deal of flexibility, as forward deployed assets in regional hotspots provided a range of capabilities. The key elements of naval strategy included aircraft carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups (ARGs) loaded with Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs), and strategic submarines.<sup>10</sup> These forward deployed forces provided an immediate reaction capability when regional

crises erupted. Thus, “From the Sea” outlined the continued role naval forces have in meeting their primary missions of maritime dominance, but focused more on the littoral regions of the world and the ability to project power from naval vessels into regional hotspots.

Just as the end of the Cold War marked a shift in Naval strategy, so too did the events of 9/11 and the ensuing GWOT. In 2006, the Navy once again adapted its strategy to meet a new environment when it signed “A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower.” This document had historical implications because it was the first time ever that a naval strategy document was signed by the Chiefs of the three maritime services, the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.<sup>11</sup> In a time of expanding missions and shrinking budgets, this document made clear the need for cooperation and integration amongst not only the three services, but also our international partners. Using the objectives laid out in the National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), National Military Strategy (NMS), and National Strategy for Maritime Superiority (NSMS), this document explicitly highlights the importance of the maritime domain, noting that it supports 90% of the world’s trade and thus holds strategic importance to the global economy.<sup>12</sup> This document outlines six strategic imperatives and the core naval capabilities required for these imperatives. Both the imperatives and capabilities are listed in Appendix E. While maintaining that the core naval capabilities remain largely unchanged, the document does delineate a clear shift in priorities for the naval services. In the author’s opinion, the key differences between this naval strategy and previous ones can be seen in the final three imperatives, *contributing to the homeland defense in depth, fostering and sustaining cooperative relations with international*

*partners, and finally preventing or containing local disruptions before they impact the global system.* Just as “From the Sea” emphasized power projection from the littorals, “A Cooperative Strategy...” highlights the important role the naval services play in homeland defense. The inclusion of this homeland defense in the naval strategy places it in line with the objectives found in the 2006 QDR. Because this is somewhat of a broad term, it will require naval forces to engage in new ways abroad in order to eliminate threats before they have the ability to attack us on our soil. This will require the Navy to reexamine the traditional definition of the “maritime environment.” In the author’s opinion, we must continue to operate in the littorals, but must place greater emphasis on expanding to inland areas around ports, harbors, and inland waterways where naval forces will be in close contact with local populations.

The second imperative that I feel has been given greater emphasis in the current strategy is the amount of cooperation required to maintain maritime superiority. While the Navy has always prided itself on its collaboration with partner navies during coalition exercises, port visits, and officer exchanges, the level of cooperation must expand beyond these traditional means. It should also include partnering with maritime security forces and relevant *populations* that have maritime interests in regions where terrorist activity could thrive due to the political or economic landscape. Again, this will require the naval services to increasingly operate ashore or in the inland waterways of countries pivotal to the “long” war on terror. These activities will occur in what Miskel describes as “pivotal” and “failed” (or failing) states where the United States can help to “promote stability in a region and thus tamp down the threat of terrorism.”<sup>13</sup>



The final imperative that has gained greater emphasis in this strategy is the importance of preventing local disruptions from affecting the global system. An example of how a regional failed state can adversely impact the global economy is the current high level of pirate activity occurring in the littorals off the Horn of Africa. Facing these type of threats will require the naval services to lean forward more than ever while thinking “outside-of-the-box” regarding new ways to counter these maritime threats. In addition to the Somali pirate example, many other regional problems exist in pivotal and failed states around the globe. The goal of the naval services is to ensure conflict within these states does not adversely impact the global economy or create a safe haven for global terrorist activity. This central tenant that “preventing wars is as important as winning wars” is a cornerstone of IW doctrine and highlights the important role the naval services play in IW missions.<sup>14</sup>

The Naval Strategy’s emphasis on homeland defense and prevention of wars in regional hotspots will require a greater than ever level of jointness and cooperation with our allied partners and groups aligned with our cause. As Admiral Mullen, then Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), previously stated about the idea of a “1,000 ship Navy”, “[This fleet is] a global maritime partnership that unites maritime forces, port operators, commercial shippers, and international governmental and nongovernmental agencies to address mutual concerns.”<sup>15</sup> In addition to this international partnership, the Navy will need to continue to work closely with Army and Marine ground forces to provide Joint Service Solution (JSS) “in-lieu-of” (ILO) personnel to continue to fill the gaps in niche capabilities. Today, the service is providing Sailors to fill critical positions in roles such as electronic warfare operators, security forces, and intelligence gathering. This

highlights the true *jointness* required in a “long” war constrained by personnel and resources. All of these factors outlined in the “Cooperative Strategy...” will require the Navy to think and act “greener” in the future. Although the Navy must maintain its core functions as a service, it must also expand its threat envelope to include inland areas where Sailors will need to put *persistent* “boots on the ground” in order to address maritime threats that may impact our national security. These types of missions will increasingly require Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen to operate amongst foreign populations to provide security to their maritime environments while helping these nations to build their own capacity to patrol their national waterways.

## **Air IW: Providing An AFSOC Model for Naval Forces**

As the IW JOC highlights, many of the war fighting missions of IW are weighted toward Army, Marine Corps, and special operations forces (SOF) ground elements. COIN, FID, and stabilization, security, transition, and reconstruction operations (SSTRO) are all key elements of IW and require “boots on the ground” working amongst the population to ensure success. Because of the weight toward ground elements, the Navy and Air Force may often find itself in a “supporting” role while conducting IW operations. Both services have thus taken steps to reshape their forces so they can best contribute to IW missions. In a May 2007 White Paper, AFSOC Commander, Lieutenant General Wooley noted “the USAF must focus its efforts in areas where we can make our greatest impact [in IW]: conducting support to counterinsurgency operations and training and enabling partner nations through aviation foreign internal defense activities.”<sup>16</sup> This statement makes it clear that AFSOC will be one of the primary Air Force components responsible for contributing to IW missions. This should not come as a surprise however, as Combat Aviation Advisors (CAA), aligned under AFSOC in 1993, remain an integral component to AFSOC’s mission.<sup>17</sup> These advisors and trainers have a rich history of supporting COIN and counter-narcotic operations around the world, as they were formally developed after the establishment of the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS) in 1961, nicknamed “Jungle Jim.” Their mission was to “build a counterinsurgency capability in developing countries from Latin America to Africa, to Southeast Asia.”<sup>18</sup> With an established COIN capability, CAA operations have occurred throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in countries like the Philippines, Colombia, and many other pivotal countries around the world.<sup>19</sup> More recently, the Air Force has

been developing the capabilities of the Afghanistan and Iraqi Air Forces by advising and training their personnel. The Combined Air Force Transition Team (CAFTT) is in the process of building an Iraqi Air Force that is 18,000 strong with 450 aircraft.<sup>20</sup> Similarly in Afghanistan, the Combined Air Power Transition Force (CAPTF) mission is to “set the conditions for a self-sustaining and fully operational Afghan Army Air Corps to meet the security requirements of Afghanistan.”<sup>21</sup> Both the Iraqi and Afghan Air Forces have been flying missions in support of ground elements in their respective countries. These historical operations as well as the current missions in Iraq and Afghanistan show how aviation support to a partner country can help them develop internal capabilities to counter insurgencies and provide security with their own indigenous forces.

Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 2-3 highlights several key aspects of air power which uniquely contribute to IW missions. These functions include building partnership capacity (BPC), intelligence collection, information operations, air mobility, combat support, precision engagement, and command and control.<sup>22</sup> Although all of these missions can in some way be supported through AFSOC capabilities, the BPC function is one in which the command is uniquely suited to handle. The 2006 QDR defines BPC as “targeted efforts to improve the collective capabilities and performance of the Department of Defense and its partners.”<sup>23</sup> There are three primary components of BPC that are outlined in the AFDD 2-3, including security assistance (SA), foreign military sales (FMS), and FID.<sup>24</sup> While FMS is generally done through political channels, SA and FID are core functions of AFSOC’s 6<sup>th</sup> SOS. The AvFID and CAA missions conducted by the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS are a key element in the IW fight and help set the conditions for developing a partner’s aviation capacity and infrastructure. This ultimately

improves their ability to counter insurgent forces within their country. In order to establish continuity, incorporate lessons learned, and carry out IW missions over an extended period expected in this “long” war, AFSOC recently introduced the concept of developing an “IW Wing” to meet these requirements. This proposed Wing would have light, medium, and heavy mobility, light strike, rotary wing, and manned ISR capability.<sup>25</sup> In accordance with the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS mission, the focus of this organization would be to develop the aviation capacity of partners so that they can ultimately provide security and stability to their own local populations.

## **Naval Capabilities for the IW Fight**

Just as the Air Force has utilized and incorporated its capabilities for the IW fight, so too must the naval services prioritize how they can best man, train, and equip their forces in order to meet the irregular challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. AFSOC's commitment to the BPC mission and its proposal to develop an "IW Wing" provide a model that can be utilized by the naval services in their IW missions. The beauty with utilizing this construct is that the Navy does not need to develop a new command or capability for the irregular fight. This is because the pieces needed to complete maritime IW missions are already in place. What is needed to bring these pieces together, however, is a greater emphasis on how these irregular capabilities can be best utilized to ensure success in the "long" war, an increased manning and funding for specific units most suitable to carrying out IW missions, and finally, improved coordination and liaison mechanisms at the operational level between the three Naval services and partner nations conducting irregular missions.

Just as AFSOC is growing the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS to handle its increasing responsibility in the "long" war, the Navy must similarly grow an organization that is best suited for these missions. In the author's opinion, this command is the newly formed Naval Expeditionary Combat Command. Some have argued that this role should be reserved for the Marine Corps or the NSW community, as many of the functions required in IW has historically been accomplished with these types of units. However, given the current operating tempo for both the Marines and NSW SEAL teams, there simply is not enough capability to fill these other missions that might normally fall under their purview. In essence, there exists a gap in some of the "softer" sides of warfare required in IW.

Because of the global nature of the threat and the irregular nature of this war, we can expect this operational tempo to remain for the foreseeable future. Because of the growing need for irregular capabilities and gaps left due to operational tempo, the Navy should utilize its existing forces in the best manner possible to handle irregular elements of the current fight. In the author's opinion, the Navy's maritime "IW Wing" should be developed within NECC.

*Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC)*

In January 2006, the Navy established NECC to tackle some of the irregular maritime missions which came to the forefront of operations as a result of the GWOT.<sup>26</sup> Most of the units under the NECC umbrella were pre-existing units that were not mainstream to traditional naval missions outlined in the "From the Sea" strategy. However, with the advent of the new "Cooperative Strategy...", these missions have taken on an increasing significance, as their roles have now become essential elements of the Navy's new strategy. As highlighted on its command website, "NECC forces and capabilities are integral to executing the new maritime strategy which is based on expanded core capabilities of maritime power: forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. To enable these, NECC provides a full spectrum of operations, including effective waterborne and ashore anti-terrorism force protection (ATFP); theater security cooperation and engagement; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief."<sup>27</sup> The units under NECC are responsible for such irregular missions as maritime civil affairs, riverine operations, construction operations, port security, and logistics support.<sup>28</sup> Appendix F lists all of the commands that currently operate under NECC. The

capabilities such as port security and maritime civil affairs mirror the SA and AvFID missions that AFSOC provides as part of its BPC capability, except that they do this in a maritime setting. By providing elements such as port security and civil affairs teams into a theater of operations, naval forces can help to ensure the security of the maritime environment in regional hotspots and thus attempt to improve the economic stability of pivotal states, and thereby indirectly increasing American security.

Just as the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS provides a great amount of IW capability to the Air Force, so too does NECC for the maritime domain. In addition to the AFSOC element, however, we also noted that other IW capabilities existed across the Air Force, including mobility, ISR, and strike. In a similar manner, other elements of the Navy also provide support to IW missions. These elements include NSW, the Marines Corps, and the Coast Guard. In addition, capabilities such as unmanned systems, retrofitted SSGN submarines, and the establishment of an IW Office (IWO) all help to contribute to the Navy's overall ability to conduct IW operations.

### *Special Operations Forces*

While NECC works to fill certain niche capabilities in the IW arena, the heart of these naval missions still lies with NSW. Navy SEAL teams were instrumental to operations early in the Afghanistan campaign, as they were able to work covertly with Afghan tribesmen to overthrow the Taliban and destroy Al Qaeda training camps. In addition, Navy SEALs continue to work around the globe in low profile, advisory missions that are significant components of BPC campaigns. After several years in the GWOT, the Department of Defense (DoD) realized the extraordinary demand being placed on SOF and thereby emphasized a need to "increase SOF to defeat terrorist extremism in



the long war” in the 2006 QDR.<sup>29</sup> While NSW has increased in size slightly in recent years due to recruitment and retention efforts, it is still a relatively small component of total naval capability and will continue to be a high demand, low density (HDLD) capability that cannot possibly meet all of the irregular demands placed on it.

### Marine Corps Capabilities

The U.S. Marine Corps has a proud history and tradition of amphibious operations and is uniquely suited for operating in the littorals and inland waterways where maritime IW will occur. Marines bring a variety of capabilities to the IW fight, including SOF, Civil Affairs, Intelligence, as well as a tried and true expeditionary mindset. However, as previously mentioned, the Marines’ operating tempo is currently maxed out, as they are largely being used as a supplement to traditional Army ground forces and not necessarily as a “littoral” or “maritime” force. As such, they are already operating in COIN and CT missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and will continue to be used in such a role for the foreseeable future. If the current planned withdrawal from Iraq leads to an increase in Marine dwell time, one might expect to see more of these units operating in support of other IW missions that are more “naval” in nature. However, given the current stress on the Army’s force structure and the time it will take to grow Army and Marine ground forces (as proposed by the Secretary of Defense), the author concludes that Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) will likely continue to be used as another “traditional” ground force comparable to Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). This once again highlights the need for the Navy to develop its own IW force to ensure it has the capability to meet irregular maritime threats.

### Coast Guard Capabilities

After the events of 9/11 and the government restructuring that followed, the Coast Guard became a part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003.<sup>30</sup> The three enduring roles of the service remained maritime safety, maritime security, and maritime stewardship.<sup>31</sup> Within these three roles are multiple mission areas that are pertinent to IW, including law enforcement, defense readiness, port security, and drug interdiction. It is in these areas where the Coast Guard can best work with the Navy to contribute to IW missions.

In addition to the requirements laid out in “A Cooperative Strategy...,” the then-heads of their services, Admirals Mike Mullen (Navy) and Thad Allen (USCG) coauthored a recent article in Proceedings that called for a “National Fleet” and highlighted the need for greater cooperation and collaboration between the two services.<sup>32</sup> They noted that this cooperation would need to occur not only near the U.S. coastline, but also in “forward operating areas halfway around the world”<sup>33</sup> While operating outside of U.S. territorial waters is not a new concept for the Coast Guard, there is a new emphasis on it which will carry the service away from mainland waters in more scenarios than ever before.

As part of this global focus, the Coast Guard recently established the DOG whose mission is “to provide properly equipped, trained, and organized force packages to Coast Guard, DHS, DoD, and interagency operational and tactical commanders as directed.”<sup>34</sup> This group of 3,000 Coast Guardsmen include maritime safety and security teams (MSST), a maritime security response team (MSRT), tactical law enforcement teams (TACLETs), port security units (PSUs), national strike teams, and the national strike force coordination center.<sup>35</sup> In conjunction with the DOG, the Coast Guard established a

Special Operations unit that is aligned under SOCOM and provides a unique maritime law enforcement capability to Combatant Commanders. Elements of the DOG are currently operating in the Persian Gulf with NECC Sailors. One of their primary missions is to train Iraqi Marines on proper boarding and security procedures.<sup>36</sup> The Coast Guard DOG and special operations unit will be a key element to future joint Navy and Coast Guard operations abroad and will provide a unique capability for maintaining the security of the maritime environment. NECC Commander, Admiral Carol Pottenger, highlighted the importance of this joint affiliation recently, noting that one of her top strategic goals was to “continue building the relationship between NECC and the DOG.”<sup>37</sup>

### Unmanned Systems

Unmanned systems act as force multipliers and provide an enormous capability to cover a variety of missions that can support IW activities. They can be used as ISR assets, communications relays, and strike platforms and thus give commanders a wide variety of useful capabilities. The persistence, low profile, multi-role capability, and relatively low cost of unmanned systems make them ideal assets to support naval activities in IW. The benefit of such systems is that they can be used in high risk missions and do not put personnel at risk. Another favorable aspect of these systems is their long on-station time and the minimal amount of personnel needed to operate them. Unmanned vehicles operate in a variety of mediums, including air, surface, and subsurface and can be launched and controlled from land or from a variety of surface assets and submarines.

The Naval services have utilized several types of unmanned *aerial* vehicles in recent years. A few of these UAVs include the Pioneer, Shadow, and Scan Eagle systems. These systems often support mundane but critical missions such as hunting for improvised explosive devices (IEDs), maritime surveillance, and general intelligence gathering. Additionally, the Navy is currently planning an operational test with the Reaper UAS, giving a potential kinetic capability to these traditional ISR platforms.<sup>38</sup> As one can see, the capabilities provided by UAVs can provide critical support to irregular missions such as COIN, SSTRO, and SA. By providing aviators to act as liaisons with AFSOC and the UAV Center of Excellence (COE) at Creech AFB, the Navy can capitalize on operational experiences and lessons learned from the Air Force while executing IW missions.

Just as UAVs support naval operations through the air, unmanned *underwater* vehicles (UUVs) also have many IW applications, including underwater mapping, mine hunting, and ATPF.<sup>39</sup> UUVs such as the Remote Environmental Monitoring Units (REMUS) and Sculpin can use forward and side sonars to help locate mines.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, they can be used to monitor harbor entrances, ports, and rivers for unusual activity. Using UUVs in these highly dangerous missions again puts fewer Sailors at risk while conducting maritime security missions.

Finally, the Navy has also recently begun incorporating unmanned *surface* vehicles (USVs) into its operations. The Spartan Scout is a rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB) with an array of sensors that allow it to conduct surveillance, force protection, mine detection, and multiple other key maritime missions.<sup>41</sup> The Spartan Scout is designed to “operate in littoral areas and [protect] the fleet from asymmetric threats, e.g.,

terrorists.”<sup>42</sup> This type of USV may be just the type of asset required help combat the number of piracy attacks off the Horn of Africa, as several of these systems can monitor the dangerous littorals near Somalia without putting Sailors into harm’s way. Although there are many tactical procedures that need to be developed to employ USVs in a less than permissive environment, the technology certainly has applications that can utilized while conducting maritime IW.

### SSGN Capabilities

In recent years, one of the most pivotal Cold War-era pieces of naval equipment has been upgraded and retrofitted to help carry out certain IW missions. Four Ohio-class submarines have been converted to an underwater special operations command center capable of covertly inserting Navy SEALs into hostile territories. These four submarines, the Ohio (SSGN 726), Michigan (SSGN 727), Florida (SSGN 728), and Georgia (SSGN 729) will each be able to carry 66 SOF personnel and 35 personnel for a joint command element.<sup>43</sup> These submarines will have the capability to launch and recover SEALs and all of their gear while still submerged. They have also been designed to launch a variety of UUVs and UAVs to help support the special operators onboard. These SSGNs will now primarily operate in the littoral regions of the world. According to the former Commanding Officer of the USS Ohio, Commander Michael Cockey, these ships “will be ideal for playing an enhanced scout role. They can put a contingency force ashore behind enemy lines without anybody knowing they are there.”<sup>44</sup> Like the myriad of unmanned vehicles present throughout naval forces, these SSGNs will provide another important capability for the IW tool kit. By delivering Navy SEALs covertly, they can

help contribute toward such IW missions as counter-terrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), and intelligence gathering.

*Establishment of an IW Office*

In July 2008, the U.S. Navy officially created an Irregular Warfare Office (IWO) as part of the Navy's OPNAV staff. This office was stood up by Rear Mark Admiral Kenny and was developed in order to "institutionalize ad hoc efforts in IW missions of counterterrorism and counter-insurgency and the supporting missions of information operations, intelligence operations, foreign internal defense, and unconventional warfare as they apply to CT and COIN."<sup>45</sup> The mission of the IWO is threefold:

1. Synchronize Navy capabilities with USSOCOM and other Combatant Commanders and interagency and international partners to support IW needs
2. Facilitate the rapid identification, development, and deployment of Navy IW capabilities
3. Institutionalize IW in the Navy's planning, investment, and capability development<sup>46</sup>

The establishment of the IWO highlights the unique role naval forces have in meeting 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and firmly establishes the Navy's commitment to meeting these irregular threats.

## Examples of Naval IW in Action

As the Navy places greater emphasis on partnering with the Coast Guard, Marines, and international navies in IW missions, we can look around the globe to see examples of this coordination in action. The first and most obvious example is in Iraq, where the naval services are busy creating a stable and secure maritime infrastructure. The Marines have obvious COIN and AT missions, mostly as part of Multi-National Force-West (MNF-W) while the Navy and Coast Guard are partnering with the Iraqi navy to provide security to their ports, terminals, and oil platforms in the northern Persian Gulf.<sup>47</sup> The NECC's riverine squadrons have also been instrumental to supporting COIN and CT missions while helping to build the Iraqi capability to patrol their inland waterways. The training of Iraqi marines by Coast Guard personnel discussed earlier again illustrates naval IW in action. All of these efforts are instrumental to creating a stable Iraq. The Iraqi defense minister, Abdual-Qader al-Obeidi, recently noted the importance of these forces in building Iraq's naval capacity and commented that a "premature pullout [of U.S. naval forces] would expose Iraq to the danger of piracy in the Persian Gulf."<sup>48</sup>

The topic of piracy leads us to another area where naval forces are facing another age-old irregular threat. The Gulf of Aden is a strategically important area where shipping lanes have come under increasing attack recently from pirates demanding large ransoms after they hijack commercial shipping. According to the International Maritime Bureau, there have been over 100 ships *attacked* this year alone, with nearly 40 of these vessels being *hijacked*.<sup>49</sup> Many of the pirates originate out of Somalia and travel in skiffs armed with rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and other weapons. A multinational force

of navies has recently increased patrols in the area in order to combat these attacks. However, the sheer size of the Gulf of Aden makes the complete elimination of piracy unrealistic. As Vice Admiral Bill Gortney, Commander Fifth Fleet, noted, “If the U.S. Navy had to provide an [anti-piracy] force that size, it would take every destroyer and cruiser in the fleet, plus three frigates.”<sup>50</sup> This realization only highlights the need for other war fighting techniques, including the use of unmanned vehicles to support ISR and assets like the littoral combat ship (LCS) that can efficiently patrol these littoral regions. A need for increased “inland” capability is once again highlighted with this threat, as the U.S. has recently floated a request through the U.N. to enter Somali waters if in “hot pursuit” of pirates.<sup>51</sup> This once again highlights the fact that maritime security involves inland areas as well as littoral regions and open oceans.

A third example where naval forces are conducting irregular missions is in the Philippines, where Navy SEALs are working in an advisory role to help develop the Philippine navy’s ability to combat Abu Sayyaf terrorists. The Abu Sayyaf operate in the jungles and along densely forested waterways in the Philippines. The mission of the SEALs is to improve the Philippine forces’ capabilities to search and destroy the terrorist elements. By enabling the Philippine navy, the SEALs have aided the indigenous forces in fixing their internal problems and thus promoted regional stability and overall U.S. security.

The final naval IW activity I will highlight is the recent deployment of the USS Fort McHenry to the west coast of Africa from October 2007 to May 2008.<sup>52</sup> This deployment marked the first in an ongoing series of naval activities in the Gulf of Guinea, dubbed the Africa Partnership Station (APS) 2008 and included the Fort McHenry, HSV



Swift, USCGC Dallas, a team of Navy Seabees, medical personnel, and a maritime aviation detachment.<sup>53</sup> The goal of this deployment strikes at the heart of IW, as it attempts to win the hearts and minds of the people of western and central Africa. In addition to training African maritime personnel on many security issues, the APS also coordinated with the State Department's U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) while conducting multiple humanitarian missions in the region. By combating narcotic and human trafficking, illegal fishing, and oil bunkering, the efforts of the APS are attempting to bring about economic stability to the area and reduce the possibility of terrorist activity developing in the region.<sup>54</sup> As Captain John Nowell, Commodore of APS 2008 noted, "A stable and secure maritime environment also promotes prosperity and peace ashore which is good for a country [and] breeds a kind of environment where you don't get extremist kinds of activity."<sup>55</sup>

#### *Forging Ahead: The Congo Example*

These above examples of naval IW missions highlight the "long" war's global nature and its reliance on U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard capabilities, as well as partnerships with other allied navies. Other examples of this type of activity can also be found in a variety of other locations around the globe where terrorist or insurgent activity has the potential to upset the maritime environment. As part of the author's research, however, I would like to propose a way forward which can build on the relationships and good faith established during the APS 2008 deployment to western Africa while furthering the Navy's commitment to IW in pursuit of strategic U.S. interests.

Another pivotal state that has the potential to upset regional stability and the maritime environment in the Gulf of Guinea is the Democratic Republic of Congo. Located within the DRC is the vast Congo River and its many tributaries. The Congo flows across the DRC and empties into the Gulf of Guinea on the west coast, near the capital city of Kinshasa. The Congo River represents potential for increasing the wealth and economic vitality of the people of the DRC. However, ethnic violence that has spilled over from the DRC's eastern neighbor, Rwanda, has caused unrest and instability along the eastern portions of the river. Armed rebels and thugs have made this part of the Congo very risky for anyone travelling and thus have completely eliminated development in these areas. There is a fear that violence in eastern Congo could move further west and thus affect security around Kinshasa. This obviously could have grave implications for what the APS has been doing to promote stability in the Gulf of Guinea, as unrest in Kinshasa has the potential to spill over into bordering countries. In addition, a weakened security environment in Kinshasa could ultimately produce a breeding ground for terrorist activity if the situation were allowed to spiral out of control. The U.S. might then be faced with a situation similar to that in the Horn of Africa region, where warlords and extremists have created an environment ripe for terrorist activity.

Currently, the United Nations (UN) has a multinational peacekeeping force, the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), whose mission is to bring peace and stability to the DRC and bring about credible elections in the country.<sup>56</sup> The author's research, however, has shown that the U.S. is not tremendously involved in this mission and that no current initiatives exist to drastically improve the security or infrastructure around Kinshasa. Ultimately, there is great potential for improvement in

the capital city if the Congo were secured. This in turn could lead to greater economic development within the region. Before this can happen, however, the U.S. will need to give greater attention to the problem while also persuading the government of the DRC to commit greater resources to tackling some of their internal infrastructure problems.

Kinshasa and the Congo River represents a ray of hope for the impoverished region, as it holds the key to economic prosperity and thus national security for the DRC. By stabilizing the nation's maritime environment, it is possible to promote the growth of legitimate commerce and eliminate a potential source for future terrorist activity from radical groups or ethnic factions such as those between the Hutus and Tutsis of the DRC.

The DRC situation is a prime example of IW and how it requires every instrument of power to be successful in order to prevent a regional, pivotal state from becoming a larger threat to U.S. national security interests. The first and most important step to improve the situation in the DRC is to get commitment from the DRC about the level of effort this will require on its own part. Then, it is possible to have the State Department and USAID work closely with the government of the DRC to eliminate corruption and develop infrastructure around the port city. This is specifically the type of transformational diplomacy that the State Department needs to employ in order to be effective against 21<sup>st</sup> century threats. It is in conjunction with these activities that the author suggests Naval and Coast Guard forces be used to provide port and harbor security, patrol the Congo River around Kinshasa for illegal activity, and use maritime civil affairs teams to develop the DRCs own internal security capacity. Technologies such as unmanned systems can help provide the surveillance capability in the port city. This joint Navy / Coast Guard operation could be placed under a UN mandate, which

would help to legitimize the MONUC forces currently operating in the DRC. The mission of these forces should be to provide FID and FP throughout the Congo River and its major tributaries. Although this approach represents a great challenge, it also provides a tremendous opportunity to secure this region of the world. As the forces of economic change take hold, an increased level of stability and security will follow, which will lead to further development and growth in the region. This approach is certainly a more focused effort compared to the size and scope of the current MONUC mission. This effort would fall in line with our nation's grand strategy by reducing the level of violence that currently grips much of the country and thus eliminate a potential future safe haven for terrorist activity. Lastly, successful economic development in the DRC can provide a model for other African countries looking to stabilize their economies and create economic and infrastructure expansion. Such an "inland" maritime mission represents the out-of-the-box thinking required to "prevent wars," as called for in the "Cooperative Strategy..."

## **Recommendations to Improve Naval IW Capability**

The development of the DoD's IW JOC was an important step for the U.S. armed forces because it helped to formalize IW doctrine and highlight the importance irregular missions will play in today's "long" war on terror. The Air Force relies heavily on AFSOC's expertise and experience in COIN operations to complete BPC missions such as SA and AvFID. The recent proposal to incorporate the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS into an IW wing is the "out-of-the-box" thinking that is necessary to allow the Air Force to best contribute to IW. In a similar fashion, the Navy should continue to develop NECC in order to become the maritime "IW Wing" for the naval services. Leveraging the capabilities of NECC and NSW and working jointly with the Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and international partners will enable the Navy to most effectively incorporate IW into their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cooperative Strategy. With this foundation, there are several recommendations that the author would like to suggest to help improve the Navy's current IW capability. These recommendations were developed during research for this project and through the author's experience working with unmanned systems. They are his opinions alone and do not represent those of the government or Department of Defense.

### *Grow / Legitimize NECC*

The current size of the NECC community is approximately 40,000 sailors and includes both active and reserve personnel.<sup>57</sup> As we have seen, the operational tempo of NSW and the Marine Corps has left gaps in certain naval IW capabilities that NECC assumed. The requirement for these types of capabilities will continue to grow as the Navy continues to focus more on littoral and inland maritime regions. Future BPC missions will require more riverine operations, port security teams, maritime civil affairs

units, and construction teams to help promote economic development and stabilize societies in pivotal and failed states around the globe. The current proposed expansion of the Marine Corps will not likely help in these maritime missions, as the plus up of personnel will be used to relieve operational stress on Marine units currently fighting more traditional “ground” COIN operations. Thus, the Navy will need to increase the number of Sailors in NECC units and possibly stand up additional port security, riverine, and civil affairs units. The author recommends an increase of 10,000 Sailors into NECC, with most of these personnel joining port security, riverine, Seabees, and maritime civil affairs units. This increase should be an appropriate mix of both active and reserve personnel in order to reduce the strain on any one component of the service.

An important piece of this recommendation for enlarging NECC is to encourage *quality* Sailors to seek out opportunities with NECC units. Stepping out of a traditional “surface”, “aviation”, or “submarine” career path can often be seen as a risk for a Sailor’s career advancement. Thus, some Sailors may shy away from assignments to NECC. Additionally, the rotation of personnel out of NECC often leads to a loss of critical skills and experience, as Sailors return to their traditional warfare specialty. In order to address some of these problems, then CNO, Admiral Mike Mullen “approved the expeditionary specialist qualification program for enlisted Sailors.”<sup>58</sup> The goal now should be to establish the same type of qualification for officers, just as the surface, aviation, and submarine communities have done. In addition, once designated an expeditionary specialist, those Officers and Sailors should have priority to stay in units within the NECC community in order to increase the overall experience of the organization. This

will in turn create a more knowledgeable and effective maritime “IW Wing” that can rely on past experiences in expeditionary operations.

### *Improve Cultural Training*

The increasing presence of expeditionary naval forces in the littorals and ashore will place Sailors in greater contact with local populations than ever before. The goal of these forces will be to help promote stable societies in pivotal and failing states in order to develop economic activity and eliminate terrorist safe havens. Economic growth can lead to a lessening of tensions that could adversely affect neighboring countries and thereby the global economy. These efforts to create stable societies will help the Navy with its strategic goal of winning the hearts and minds of local populations in pivotal regions. However, in order to do this, our Sailors must have a better understanding of local customs and cultural norms in the areas where they are going to deploy. Thus, I recommend increasing the level of cultural training our forces get prior to deploying into their area of responsibility (AOR). This effort would support the 2006 QDR IW roadmap, which calls for “pre-deployment readiness standards for language proficiency and regional understanding.”<sup>59</sup> This training should be primarily focused on those forces that will be operating ashore for most of their deployment, including Riverines, maritime civil affairs teams, Seabees, and port security personnel. NECC has made strides in this arena, as several of their Sailors received pre-deployment cultural training prior to deploying as part of the APS 2008.<sup>60</sup> Currently, there are multiple ad hoc language and culture training opportunities that naval units can utilize for pre-deployment training. However, to get the most “bang for your buck” from lessons learned and the experience of previous deployers to a given location, the service should look to create a cultural

“center of excellence” similar to those seen in the Marine Corps and Air Force. In 2005, the Marines established the Marine Corps Center for Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL). This organization provides deploying forces “training and education on foreign cultures, languages, and regional and cultural contexts of counterinsurgency and irregular warfare.”<sup>61</sup> Likewise, the Air Force has developed the Center for Culture and Language Studies to aid their Airmen on similar educational issues. The Navy would do well to centralize their cultural education efforts under one command, like the Marine Corps has done, and help provide “expeditionary” Sailors with the knowledge they need to most effectively operate amongst foreign populations.

#### *Invest in Key Technologies / Platforms*

The role of the Navy today has evolved to meet the irregular threats the service finds in the maritime environment. These threats will require the Navy to continually evaluate the systems and capabilities within the fleet and the gaps it needs to fill to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some of the key capabilities for fighting tomorrow’s irregular threat that the Navy must continue to invest in are unmanned vehicles, the littoral combat ship (LCS), and SSGN upgrades.

We have seen the unquenchable demand for ISR in the current Iraq and Afghanistan conflict. UAVs provide a cost effective way to get intelligence to the war fighter on the ground. Because this demand is not expected to be reduced in the coming years, the Navy must continue to invest not only in these systems, but also in training for its pilots and sensor operators that fly these vehicles. USVs and UUVs also provide intelligence for those forces providing security to ports, harbors, and rivers across the globe and will remain instrumental to combating irregular forces.



The Navy's continued operational presence in littoral regions around the world led to the development of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). This vessel greatly reduces the crew requirements due to the automation of the ship and is based on a modular design that can be quickly reconfigured to meet a variety of missions, such as anti-submarine warfare, anti-mine warfare, and surface warfare while also having the ability to carry a detachment of UAVs.<sup>62</sup> Many of the "niche" missions the LCS is designed to handle are currently being conducted by Arleigh Burke class destroyers, leading to "overkill" and not the most efficient use of naval assets.<sup>63</sup> The first of two LCS test platforms, the USS Freedom, has been delivered to the Navy and is currently being operationally tested. However, as Commander Peter Winter pointed out in his Naval War College thesis, the decision to purchase only 55 of these vessels "may leave the Navy with less than the desired number of ships to carry out future missions" in AT and maritime security.<sup>64</sup> Given the growing threat in the littoral regions and the decreasing number of available frigates to meet littoral missions, the Navy should consider increasing the number of LCSs it purchases in order to effectively and efficiently operate in the littorals.

#### *Establish an Expeditionary Naval UAV Squadron*

As of August 2008, the Navy has been left without a dedicated "expeditionary" unit that specializes in unmanned aerial vehicles, as it deactivated its only squadron with operational expeditionary experience, Fleet Composite Squadron Six (VC-6). This squadron flew multiple UAVs in combat environments, including Pioneer, Tern, Scan Eagle, and Shadow unmanned systems. Without such a squadron today, the Navy has effectively lost its ability to retain corporate knowledge regarding operational lessons learned in deployed UAV operations. By creating a UAV squadron that has personnel

trained on multiple UAV systems, the Navy can reestablish a central clearinghouse of expertise with regard to the multiple types of UAV systems that are currently being flown and tested in an ad hoc manner within the Navy. The organizational structure for such a squadron is currently in place in the form of reserve squadron, “Unmanned Aircraft Systems – Combat Experiment Squadron 0966. This squadron is participating in an operational test in which it will be flying Reaper UASs as part of a deployed exercise.<sup>65</sup> Once the operational test is complete, the author recommends commissioning this unit as an active duty squadron to ensure the lessons from this test are not lost due to the transfer of personnel and the ad hoc nature of reserve manning. Once personnel and squadron infrastructure are in place, the author recommends training its pilots and sensor operators on other platforms, including Shadow and Scan Eagle, as these type of systems will continue to be high demand assets capable of providing coveted ISR to war fighters and Combatant Commanders.

Because the operation of UAVs such as Scan Eagle, Shadow, and Reaper are expeditionary in nature, the Navy could gain great synergies by placing this expeditionary UAV squadron under the NECC umbrella. In addition to providing ISR to groups like the Riverines and Special Operators, this unit would help formalize an aviation capability which currently does not exist under NECC. In addition to providing UAV services, the squadron could also serve as liaison to deployed NECC commands regarding a variety of “expeditionary” aviation capabilities. Additionally, the command’s personnel would integrate closely with AFSOC and the Joint UAV COE in developing future UAV tactics and operating procedures. This would, of course, require NECC to purchase a requisite number of aviation billets and man the unit with appropriately

qualified personnel from across Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) communities.

However, in order to most effectively utilize the capabilities these UAVs bring to the table, it is necessary to develop within NECC an expeditionary UAV squadron with a wide variety of expertise from across aviation platforms.

#### *Establish an IW COE within NECC*

In an effort to coordinate the best ways to use maritime forces in IW, the author recommends establishing a Naval IW Center of Excellence (NIWCOE) at NECC. This again, utilizes a current AFSOC structure as a model in which to replicate. The Air Force Coalition and Irregular Warfare Center of Excellence (CIWC) was established to “facilitate the development of airpower capabilities, capacities, and relationships in partner nations.”<sup>66</sup> Likewise, a NIWCOE would contain liaison elements from the Coast Guard DOG, the Marines, NSWG, the proposed expeditionary UAV squadron, and each command within NECC. While the current IWO is more focused on strategic issues such as short-fused acquisition requirements to support SOCOM, the proposed NIWCOE would focus more at the operational and tactical level and could establish better IW coordination efforts among the services and warfare specialties. The NIWCOE would integrate with the IWO within OPNAV to ensure unity of effort. By having liaisons from each IW component working together, the Navy would greatly benefit from the synergies developed within the proposed organization.

#### *Develop “IW Truths for Sailors”*

Utilizing a final Air Force construct, I recommend developing a set of “IW Truths for Sailors” modeled after the “IW Truths for Airmen” that are outlined in AFDD 2-3. The “Truths for Airmen” are listed in Appendix G and provide an overarching vision for

Airmen conducting IW missions. By developing a unique set of values for our Sailors who are conducting IW operations, we can emphasize the enduring strategic importance of these missions. The truths for Sailors should take important points of the “Cooperative Strategy...” that relate to IW and attempt to codify them into a few simple principles that our Sailors can use as motivation when carrying out these “new” irregular missions. The author’s proposed “IW Truths for Sailors” are listed below:

1. The maritime environment is critical to the security and stability of the global economy and thus contains strategic importance for the United States. This environment includes the open ocean, littorals, ports, harbors, and inland waterways.
2. The prevention of war is as important as winning war. Prevention of war will increasingly require Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, and Marines to provide a persistent presence among maritime populations. Naval personnel are uniquely suited for these missions because of our expeditionary nature.
3. The focus of naval IW operations shall be to provide stability and enable economic development in order to win the hearts and minds of relevant populations.
4. The U.S. Navy must be prepared to simultaneously conduct irregular and traditional naval warfare operations.

## **Conclusion**

As the United State Navy continues to transition its forces and strategy for the post-9/11 environment, it will find itself operating in littoral and inland maritime environments to combat irregular threats in increasing regularity. Providing for the homeland defense mission and “preventing wars” will require the Navy to adopt philosophies espoused by Sun Tzu, including developing a long term approach to problem solving, achieving national security objectives without fighting, and using its forces in unorthodox ways to accomplish its mission.

The creation of NECC in 2006 mirrors AFSOC’s 6<sup>th</sup> SOS capability in the maritime environment. In essence, NECC is the Navy’s maritime “IW Wing” of varied capabilities that is so instrumental to BPC missions like SA and FID. NECC, along with NSW, the Marine Corps, and Coast Guard provide a truly joint capability to meet the irregular challenges outlined in the 2006 QDR. These joint capabilities are instrumental in meeting the objectives laid out in “A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower.” By increasing the manning level of NECC, improving cultural and language training for “expeditionary” Sailors, investing in key technologies, and continuing to develop and formalize IW organizations in the Navy, the service can be assured of meeting the irregular threat it will face in the “long” war. The author’s DRC scenario provides an example of how naval forces can be used inland to create stability and economic growth in pivotal states and thereby eliminate potential terrorist safe havens. This is a key tenant of the “Cooperative Strategy’s” statement that the “prevention of wars is as important as winning wars” and will be instrumental in defense of the homeland over the long term. Success in IW will require a sustained effort utilizing all aspects of our nation’s IOPs.

The recommendations contained in this paper will help to ensure the U.S. Navy is most effectively prepared to meet the irregular maritime challenges our nation will face in the future.

## **List of Acronyms**

AFDD	Air Force Doctrine Document
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
AOR	Area of Responsibility
APS	Africa Partnership Station
ARG	Amphibious Readiness Group
ATFP	Anti Terrorism / Force Protection
AvFID	Aviation Foreign Internal Defense
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
BPC	Building Partnership Capacity
CAA	Combat Aviation Advisor
CAFTT	Combined Air Force Transition Team
CAOCL	Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (USMC)
CAPTF	Combined Air Power Transition Force
CCTS	Combat Crew Training Squadron
CMO	Civil-Military Operations
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COE	Center of Excellence
COIN	Counter Insurgency
CT	Counter Terrorism
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DIME	Diplomacy, Informational, Military, Economic (Instruments of Power)
DoD	Department of Defense
DOG	Deployable Operations Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
GWOT	Global War on Terror
HDL D	High Demand Low Density
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IED	Improvised Explosive Device

ILO	In-Lieu Of
IO	Information Operations
IOP	Instrument of Power
IW	Irregular Warfare
JOC	Joint Operating Concept
JSS	Joint Service Solution
LCS	Littoral Combat Ship
MAGTF	Marine Air Ground Task Force
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MNF-W	Multi-National Force-West
MONUC	UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MSRT	Maritime Security and Response Team
MSST	Maritime Safety and Security Team
NAE	Naval Aviation Enterprise
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NECC	Naval Expeditionary Combat Command
NIWCOE	Naval Irregular Warfare Center of Excellence (proposed)
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
NSMS	National Strategy for Maritime Superiority
NSW	Naval Special Warfare
PSU	Port Security Units
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RHIB	Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
SA	Security Assistance
SOCOM	Special Operations Command
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOS	Special Operations Squadron



SSTRO	Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations
TACLET	Tactical Law Enforcement Team
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USCG	US Coast Guard
USV	Unmanned Surface Vehicle
UUV	Unmanned Underwater Vehicle
UW	Unconventional Warfare

## Appendix A

### Historical Cases of IW<sup>67</sup>

#### Countering Irregular Threats

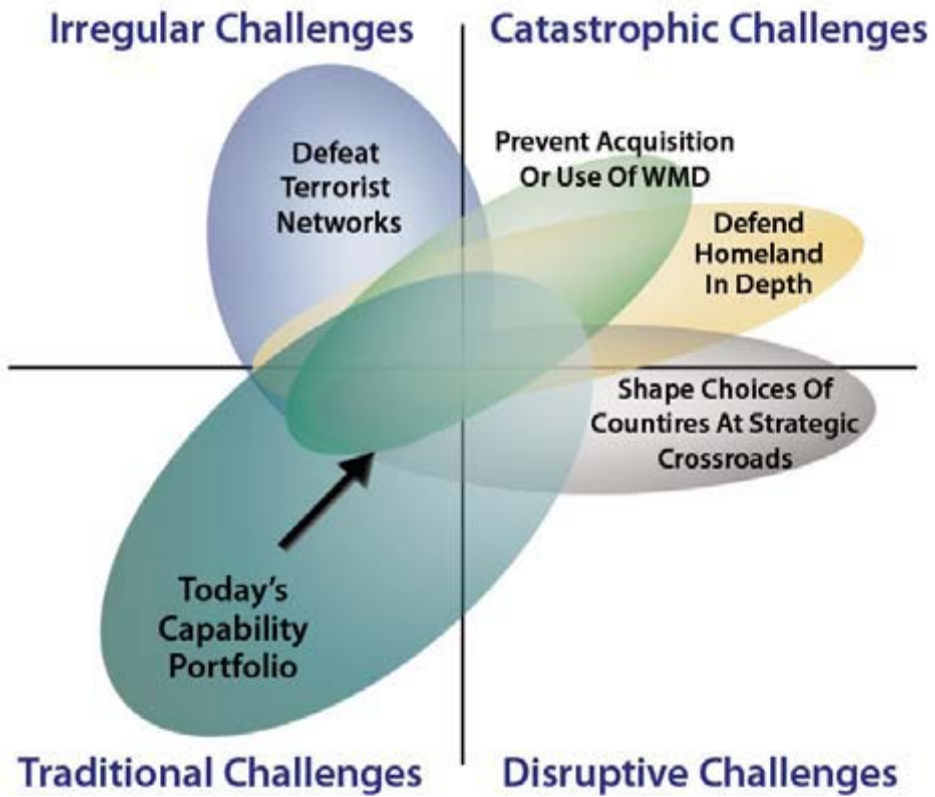
- Philippine Insurrection (1898 – 1902)
- “Banana Wars” (1915 – 1934)
- Malayan “Emergency” (1948-1960)
- Huk Rebellion in the Philippines (1946-1954)
- Algerian Insurrection (1954-1962)
- Vietnam War (1960-1975)
- El Salvador War (1980-1992)

#### Waging Irregular Warfare

- U.S.-Philippine Resistance to Japanese Occupation (1942 - 1945)
- United Nations Partisan Operations in Korea (1951 - 1953)
- U.S. Unconventional Warfare in North Vietnam (1964 - 1972)
- U.S. Unconventional Warfare in South Vietnam (1967 - 1972)
- U.S. Unconventional Warfare in the Soviet-Afghan War (1981 - 1989)
- U.S. Unconventional Warfare in Kuwait (1990 - 1991)
- U.S. Unconventional Warfare in Afghanistan (2001-2002)

## Appendix B

### Shifting Force Structure<sup>68</sup>



## **Appendix C**

### **Operations that comprise Irregular Warfare<sup>69</sup>**

Insurgency

Counterinsurgency (COIN)

Unconventional Warfare (UW)

Terrorism

Counterterrorism (CT)

Foreign Internal Defense (FID)

Stabilization, security, transition, and reconstruction operations (SSTRO)

Strategic Communications

Psychological Operations (PSYOP)

Information Operations (IO)

Civil-Military Operations (CMO)

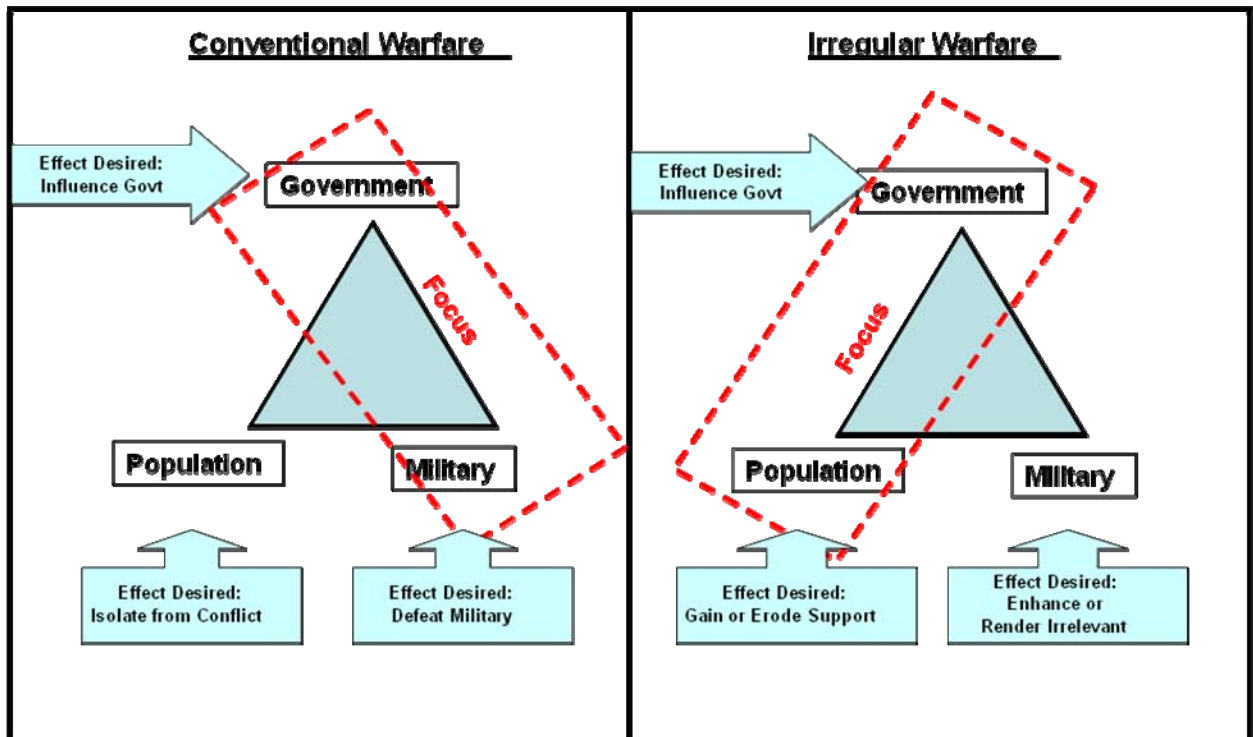
Intelligence and Counterintelligence Activities

Transnational criminal activities, including narco-trafficking, illicit arms dealing, and  
illegal financial transactions that support or sustain IW

Law enforcement activities focused on countering irregular adversaries

## Appendix D

### Conventional vs. Irregular Warfare<sup>70</sup>



## **Appendix E**

### **Strategic Imperatives for the Naval Services<sup>71</sup>**

1. Limit regional conflict with forward deployed, decisive maritime power
2. Deter major power war
3. Win our nation's wars
4. Contribute to homeland defense in depth
5. Foster and sustain cooperative relationships with international partners
6. Prevent or contain local disruptions before they impact the global system

### **Six Core Naval Capabilities (As outlined in “A Cooperative Strategy...”)<sup>72</sup>**

1. Forward presence
2. Deterrence
3. Sea Control
4. Power Projection
5. Maritime Security
6. Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Response

## **Appendix F**

### **NECC Commands<sup>73</sup>**

1<sup>st</sup> Naval Construction Division

Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center (ECRC)

Expeditionary Training Command (ETC)

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group 1

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group 2

Maritime Civil Affairs Group (MCAG)

Maritime Expeditionary Security Group 1

Maritime Expeditionary Security Group 2

Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Command Bahrain (CTF-56)

NECC Detachment Combat Camera

Navy Expeditionary Intelligence Command (NEIC)

Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG)

NAVELSG Training and Evaluation Unit

NAVELSG Expeditionary Support Group

Riverine Group 1

## **Appendix G**

### **IW Truths for Airmen<sup>74</sup>**

1. The Air Force must be prepared to simultaneously conduct irregular and traditional warfare operations.
2. IW is a different form of warfare and not a lesser form of conflict within traditional warfare. In IW, the struggle for legitimacy and influence over a relevant population is the primary focus of operations, not the coercion of key political leaders or defeat of their military capability.
3. IW is intelligence intensive.
4. Unity of effort across all instruments of power is essential to overall strategic success.
5. Effective working relationships between people and organizations are key to success in IW.
6. Integrated C2 structures enable flexibility at all levels and are vital to successful COIN operations.
7. Operational effectiveness in IW can be very difficult to measure; thus, feedback through a strong operations assessment and lessons learned operation is essential to strategic success.
8. The adversary may be highly complex and adaptive.



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